



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN & POLITICAL FINANCE

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PUBLIC EMPLOYEES AND CAMPAIGNS

M.G.L. Chapter 55, the Campaign Finance Law, regulates political activity by public employees and the use of public buildings and resources in campaigns. Public employees who take part in political campaigns and the candidates and committees they support should be aware of these sections of the law.

Section 13: Public Employees

No person employed for compensation by the Commonwealth, its cities, towns and counties, and public agencies, other than an elected official, may directly or indirectly solicit or receive a contribution or anything of value for any political purpose.

A public employee **may not**:

- sell tickets to a political fundraiser or otherwise solicit or collect contributions in any manner, such as by phone or mail.
- serve as treasurer of a political committee.
- allow his name to be used in a solicitation letter or fundraising phone call.
- help identify people to be targeted for political fundraising.

A public employee **may**:

- run for office (provided a committee is organized on his behalf if he plans to raise any money).
- contribute to candidates and attend fundraisers.
- work for campaigns and committees in a non-fundraising capacity, such as holding signs, stuffing envelopes, hosting coffees or other informational meetings, or being a member of a committee.

Section 14: Public Buildings

Soliciting or receiving campaign contributions in a public (government) building is prohibited. Examples include City or Town Hall, office buildings, public schools and libraries, police and fire stations and public works garages.

No one (not just public employees) may:

- sell tickets to a fundraiser or otherwise solicit or collect political contributions in a public building.
- use a public building as the site of a fundraiser, the return address for contributions or the contact phone number for buying tickets to a fundraiser.
- post in a public building any advertisements for a fundraiser.

Use of Public Resources

Campaign finance law prohibits the use of public resources for political campaign purposes, such as influencing the nomination or election of a candidate or the passage or defeat of a ballot question. "Public resources" encompass just about anything that is paid for by the taxpayers, such as vehicles, office equipment and supplies, buildings, and the paid time of public employees. For example, a public employee may not, during his work day, render campaign service to a candidate or work in favor of or against ballot question.

Contact OCPF for more information or a copy of our *Campaign Finance Guide: Public Employees, Public Resources and Political Activity*.

